

Statement of the United Nations Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues to the

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its 14th session

Item 8

Thursday, 23 May 2015

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madam Chairperson,

Honourable Permanent Forum members,

Indigenous representatives,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to provide a brief introduction to the report on the annual meeting of the UN Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues - or IASG. OHCHR has had the pleasure to chair IASG for the past year, in close partnership with our colleagues in the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum, building on the excellent work that UNICEF pursued as the previous chair.

Madam Chairperson,

On behalf of the IASG, I would like to start by congratulating you on your election as the chairperson of the 14th session of the Forum. We look forward to cooperating with you closely, as we have done with the outgoing chair, and providing strong support to the important work of the Permanent Forum.

This has been a significant, hectic year for all of us working on indigenous peoples, including for the Inter-Agency Support Group. After our active engagement in the World Conference, IASG moved rapidly to support follow-up to the Outcome Document of the World Conference, which recognizes the important role that IASG has to play in ensuring coordinated and coherent UN action on indigenous peoples.

Supporting such follow-up was the main focus our annual meeting, hosted by OHCHR in Geneva on 1-2 December. The meeting brought together focal points for indigenous peoples' issues from 17 agencies, and it benefitted from active participation of the Special Rapporteur of the

Human Rights Council on the Rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz, the Chair of the Permanent Forum, Dalee Sambo Dorrough, and the Permanent Forum's focal point for the Support Group, Joan Carling.

A detailed report of the meeting has been submitted to this session as is available on-line, but I would like to briefly highlight some key items that we addressed.

At the meeting, IASG launched its work to support the preparation of a system-wide action plan, to be developed in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples and Member States. IASG discussed lessons that can be drawn from other United Nations system-wide action plans, including the ones on youth and gender and highlighted such key considerations as

- the need to root the action plan in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- the importance of engaging UN regional and country presences and
- the relevance of the post-2015 development agenda

A small informal working group was set up to take this work on SWAP further with our indigenous and state partners.

IASG also had a fruitful stocktaking of various initiatives concerning the development and use of indicators related to indigenous peoples, and we are now working to develop further support to operationalizing agreed indicators and to consider their application in connection with the post-2015 development agenda.

IASG also examined how to encourage national human rights institutions to advance indigenous peoples' rights at the national and international level, in line with the Outcome Document of the World Conference. We looked at various good practices that exist in this respect, and members stressed the need for new capacity building and training for and with NHRIs, using new tools that have been developed in this respect.

Madame Chair,

IASG is convinced that decisive follow up to the Outcome Document of the World Conference will yield concrete improvements in the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. While States have the main duty to realize the commitments made at the World Conference, the UN system has a crucial role to play in this respect, and IASG is committed to contributing to this task, in close partnership with States and Indigenous Peoples.

